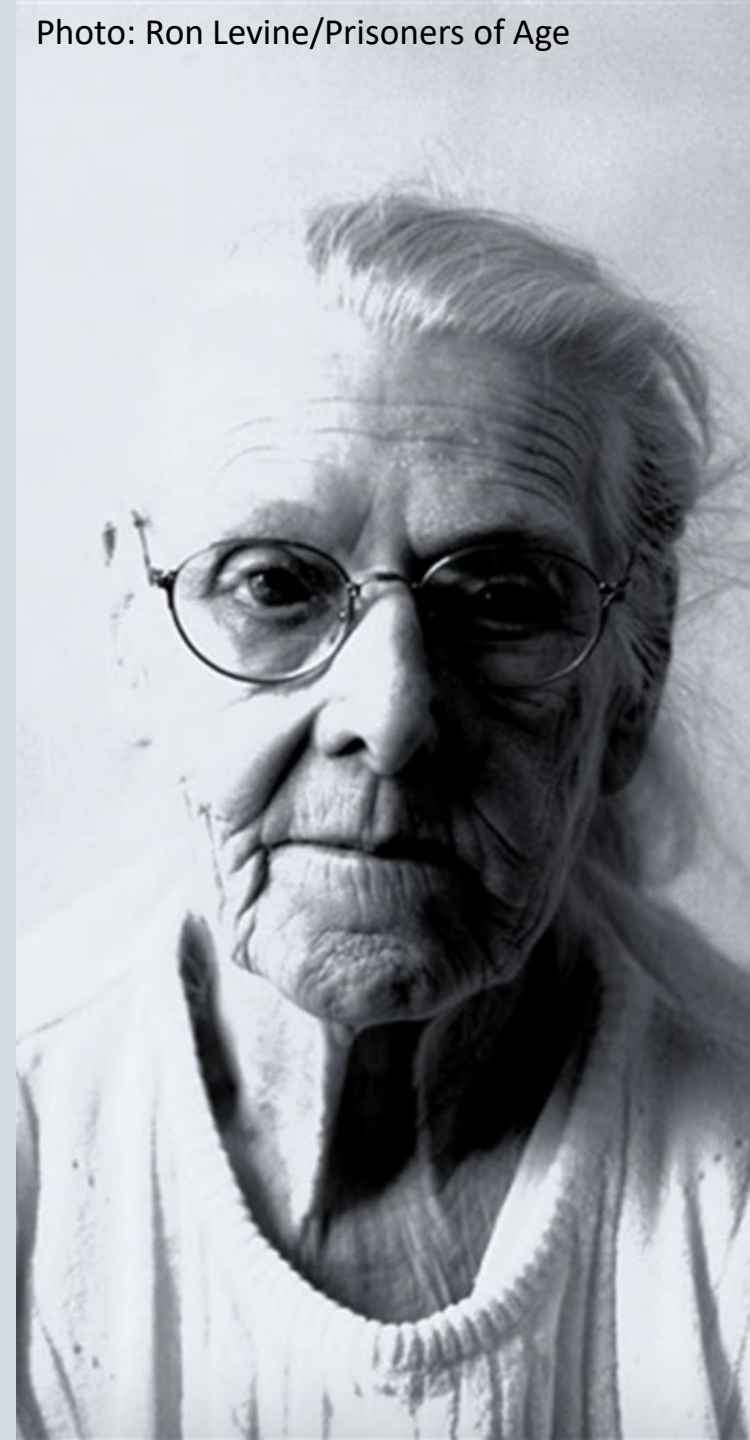


# Aging and Cognitive Health in a Correctional Setting

MICHELE DITOMAS, MD, MS  
CHIEF MEDICAL EXECUTIVE  
PALLIATIVE CARE INITIATIVE  
OCTOBER 18, 2023





Share



Info

MORE VIDEOS

scie



0:03 / 10:23



YouTube



## Living with dementia

YouTube | Social Care Institute for Excellence (SCIE) | 693.9K views | Sep 24, 2014



# Overview

---

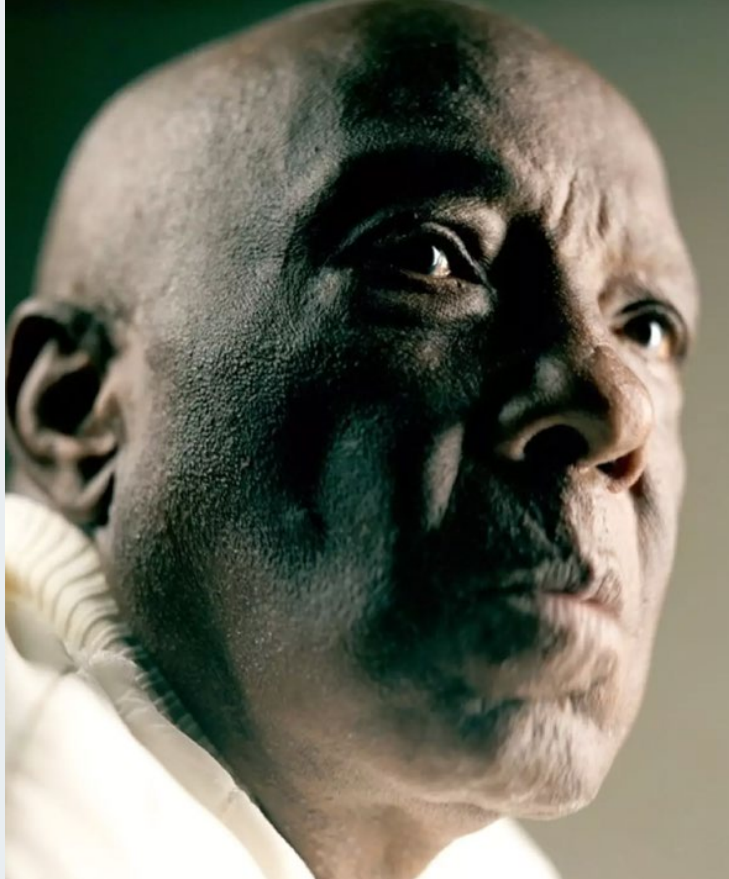


Photo: Ron Levine/Prisoners of Age

- Aging Demographics
- CDCR/CCHCS Program Overview
- Cognitive Changes in Aging
- Dementia
- Cognitive Assessment Tools
- Decision-Making Capacity
- Communication Tips
- Areas for Collaboration



# CA's Aging Prison Population

Nationwide 1993—2013 over 400% increase  
in incarcerated adults 55+; in CA:

	2010	2023
Total Incarcerated	~ 150,000	~ 100,000
Total 55 and older	~11,000	~18,000
Proportion >55 yo	7%	18%

# Program Overview

---

Correctional Treatment Center (CTC)

Outpatient Housing Unit (OHU)

Palliative Care Unit

Memory Care Units

Hospice

Clark Units (DDP)

General Population

24 hour  
nursing care



# EMP: Golden Legacy MCU

---

- Internally, CHCF and CMF (63 MCU beds)
- Needed for LWOP, those who are not quite severe enough to qualify or those with significant MH or behavioral challenges not accepted by GL
- Resource intensive patient population
- Increase internal capacity by moving high need patients to Golden Legacy
  - Increased flexibility, tools and training to better address needs of this population

# Alzheimer's & Dementia Care Videos

## Refusal to Take Medications




Caregiver Training: Refusal to Take Medication | UCLA Alzheimer's and Dementia Care Program





UCLA Health   
519K subscribers

**Subscribe**


 2.4K



 Share

 Save





# Cognitive Changes in Aging

---

- Normal aging – decline in learning new information but not memory retention, getting lost, loss of IADL
- Mild Cognitive Impairment (MCI) – objective cognitive impairments greater than expected for age without decline in overall level of function
- Dementia – cognitive impairment representing a decline in cognition that interferes with daily function and independence; **general term** for difficulty with reasoning, judgement and memory but not a cause
- Delirium – acute, transient, fluctuations in attention and consciousness



## Global Deterioration Scale (GDS)

---

1 – No cognitive decline

---

2 – Very mild (Forgetfulness)

---

3 – Mild (Early confusional)

---

4 – Moderate (Late confusional)

---

5 – Moderate Severe (*Early Dementia*)

---

6 – Severe (*Middle Dementia*)

---

7 – Very severe (*Late Dementia*)



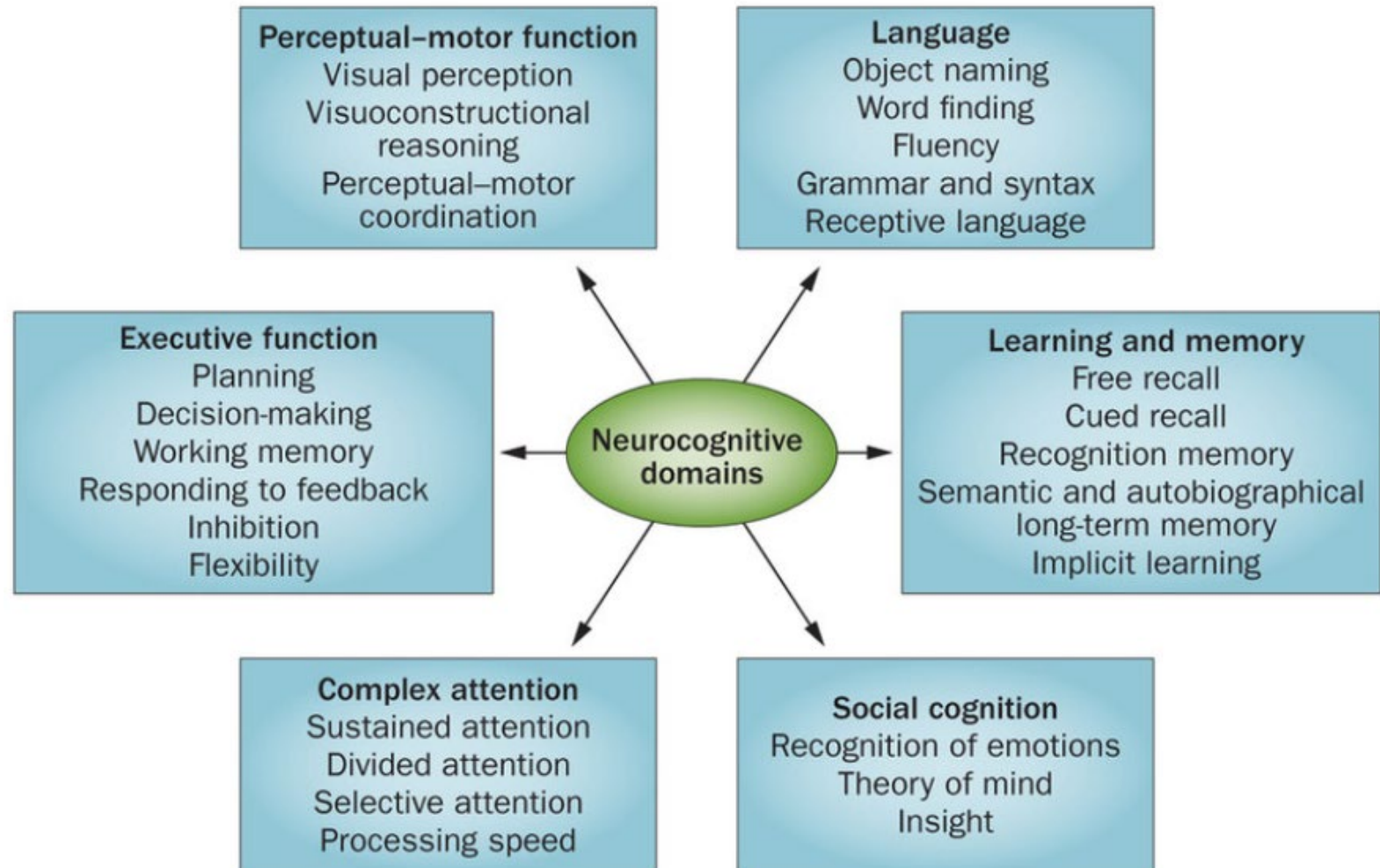
# DSM-5 Criteria for Major Neurocognitive Disorder

---

- A. Evidence of **significant cognitive decline** from a previous level of performance in one or more cognitive domains
- B. The cognitive deficits **interfere with independence in everyday activities**
- C. The cognitive deficits **do not occur exclusively in the context of delirium**
- D. The cognitive deficits are **not better explained by another mental disorder** (eg: MDD, schizophrenia)

# DSM-5 Criteria for Major Neurocognitive Disorder (cont)

---



# DEMENTIA

An infographic titled 'DEMENTIA' under a purple umbrella. Below the umbrella, a definition states: 'Umbrella term for loss of memory and other thinking abilities severe enough to interfere with daily life.' Five teal raindrops represent different types of dementia: Alzheimer's (60-80%), Lewy Body Dementia (5-10%), Vascular Dementia (5-10%), Frontotemporal Dementia (5-10%), and Others (Parkinson's, Huntington's). A teal puddle at the bottom represents 'Mixed dementia: Dementia from more than one cause'.

Umbrella term for loss of memory and other thinking abilities severe enough to interfere with daily life.

Alzheimer's:  
60-80%

Lewy Body  
Dementia:  
5-10%

Vascular  
Dementia:  
5-10%

Frontotemporal  
Dementia:  
5-10%

Others:  
Parkinson's,  
Huntington's

Mixed dementia:  
Dementia from more than one cause



# Alzheimer's Dementia

---

- **#1** cause over 65 yo
- **Recent memory loss, impaired executive function and reduced insight** are common early features
- Changes in **mood or emotion** (anxious, frightened or sad)
- **Behavioral and psychological** changes are sometimes later
- Treatment may slow but no cure and **progressive in all patients**
- Average life expectancy after dx of AD is **8-10 yrs** but range 3-20





# Vascular dementia

---

- Most common after Alzheimer's
- MRI small vessel disease but **extent of changes DOES NOT correlate** with severity of dementia
- Prominent impairment of **executive function and processing speed**



# Other Causes

---

- **Dementia with Lewy Bodies** – earlier onset, visual hallucinations, Parkinson's like motor changes, more rapid progression, cognitive flux
- **Parkinson's Disease with Dementia** – dementia late in disease
- **Frontotemporal Dementia**
  - Frontal – personality changes and inappropriate social behaviors
  - Temporal – problems with understanding language (speech and writing)
- HIV dementia, Repeated Trauma, Alcoholism, other neurodegenerative



# Physical Health and Cognition

---

- Medical conditions can exacerbate poor cognition
  - Heart Failure
  - Kidney Failure
  - Liver Failure
- Medications can worsen cognition
- Reduced hearing, vision, sensation can increase cognitive impairment





# What are barriers to identifying patients with cognitive impairment?

---

- Often do not self-present; no family
- May be in denial or unaware of deficits
- Institution life is very regimented, very few choices (no driving, no keys, no ATM, shop)
- Easy to cover up in 15 min office visit (18s)
- Judgment (he 'refused' appt, BPH, work)
- Fear of looking weak, being a victim
- Conceal because afraid of losing their housing and support system
- Can be experts at nodding to avoid showing deficits (eg: Grandfather)
- Often missed with casual conversation (eg)

**Step 1: Three Word Registration**

Look directly at person and say, "Please listen carefully. I am going to say three words that I want you to repeat back to me now and try to remember. The words are [select a list of words from the versions below]. Please say them for me now." If the person is unable to repeat the words after three attempts, move on to Step 2 (clock drawing).

The following and other word lists have been used in one or more clinical studies.<sup>14</sup> For repeated administrations, use of an alternative word list is recommended.

Version 1	Version 2	Version 3	Version 4	Version 5	Version 6
Banana	Leader	Village	River	Captain	Daughter
Sunrise	Season	Kitchen	Nation	Garden	Heaven
Chair	Table	Baby	Finger	Picture	Mountain

**Step 2: Clock Drawing**

Say: "Next, I want you to draw a clock for me. First, put in all of the numbers where they go." When that is completed, say: "Now, set the hands to 10 past 11."

Use preprinted circle (see next page) for this exercise. Repeat instructions as needed as this is not a memory test. Move to Step 3 if the clock is not complete within three minutes.

**Step 3: Three Word Recall**

Ask the person to recall the three words you stated in Step 1. Say: "What were the three words I asked you to remember?" Record the word list version number and the person's answers below.

Word List Version: \_\_\_\_\_ Person's Answers: \_\_\_\_\_

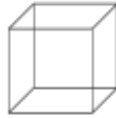
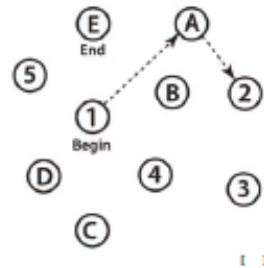
**Scoring**

Word Recall: _____ (0-3 points)	1 point for each word spontaneously recalled without cueing.
Clock Draw: _____ (0 or 2 points)	Normal clock = 2 points. A normal clock has all numbers placed in the correct sequence and approximately correct position (e.g., 12, 3, 6 and 9 are in anchor positions) with no missing or duplicate numbers. Hands are pointing to the 11 and 2 (11:10). Hand length is not scored. Inability or refusal to draw a clock (abnormal) = 0 points.
Total Score: _____ (0-5 points)	Total score = Word Recall score + Clock Draw score.  A cut point of <3 on the Mini-Cog™ has been validated for dementia screening, but many individuals with clinically meaningful cognitive impairment will score higher. When greater sensitivity is desired, a cut point of <4 is recommended as it may indicate a need for further evaluation of cognitive status.

# MINI-COG

- Screening Test
- Usually followed up with a more extensive test



**VISUOSPATIAL/EXECUTIVE**

 Copy  
 cube

 Draw CLOCK (Ten past eleven)  
 (2 points)

Points

 [ ] [ ] [ ]  
 Contour Numbers Hands

\_/5

**NAMING**


[ ]



[ ]



[ ]

\_/3

**MEMORY**

Read list of words, subject must repeat them. Do 2 trials, even if 1st trial is successful. Do a recall after 5 minutes.

 1<sup>st</sup> TRIAL

FACE

VELVET

CHURCH

DAISY

RED

 NO  
 POINTS

 2<sup>nd</sup> TRIAL

**ATTENTION**

Read list of digits (1 digit/sec.).

Subject has to repeat them in the forward order.

[ ] 1 2 1 8 5 4

Subject has to repeat them in the backward order.

[ ] 7 4 2

\_/2

Read list of letters. The subject must tap with his hand at each letter A. No points if &gt; 2 errors.

[ ] F B A C M N A A J K L B A F A K D E A A A J A M O F A A B

\_/1

Serial 7 subtraction starting at 100.

[ ] 93

[ ] 86

[ ] 79

[ ] 72

[ ] 65

\_/3

4 or 5 correct subtractions: 3 pts, 2 or 3 correct: 2 pts, 1 correct: 1 pt, 0 correct: 0

**LANGUAGE**

Repeat: I only know that John is the one to help today.

[ ]

The cat always hid under the couch when dogs were in the room.

[ ]

\_/2

Fluency: Name maximum number of words in one minute that begin with the letter F.

[ ] \_\_\_\_\_ (Not 11 words)

\_/1

**ABSTRACTION**

Similarity between e.g. orange - banana = fruit

[ ]

train - bicycle

[ ]

watch - ruler

[ ]

\_/2

**DELAYED RECALL**

(MIS)

Has to recall words WITH NO CUE

FACE

VELVET

CHURCH

DAISY

RED

Points for UNCUED recall only

\_/5

Memory Index Score (MIS)

X1

Category cue

[ ]

[ ]

[ ]

[ ]

[ ]

MIS = \_\_\_/15

X2

Multiple choice cue

[ ]

[ ]

[ ]

[ ]

[ ]

[ ]

**ORIENTATION**

[ ] Date

[ ] Month

[ ] Year

[ ] Day

[ ] Place

[ ] City

\_/6

© Z. Nasreddine MD

www.mocatest.org

MIS: /15

Training and Certification are required to ensure accuracy.

(Normal = 26/30)

Add 1 point if &gt; 12 yrs edu

TOTAL

\_/30

ADMINISTERED BY

Dittomas, Michele

MOCA CERTIFIED RATER ID U8DITM710633443-01

# Montreal Cognitive Assessment (MoCA)

- Validated tool, requires certification
- Identifies deficiencies in multiple cognitive domains **that may not be elucidated during an informal interview**
- Sensitivity and specificity—highly sens and spec for cognitive impairment
- Approximate Scoring

Cognition	Score	Average
Normal	26-30	27.2
Mild CI	19-25	22.1
Mod CI	11-21	16.2
Severe CI	10 or less	?

**\*Always interpreted in the context of the individual and clinical picture**

# Decision-making capacity

---

- Huge challenge /ethical consideration
- Do they have the cognitive ability to participate in a complex discussion? Maybe....
- Medically assessed, decision by decision, moment to moment
- Autonomy vs beneficence
- Must be able to:
  - Understand their options, risks, benefits
  - Express a choice
  - Appreciate how the info applies to them
  - Reason (compare choices and infer the consequences of their choice)



# Tips for Communication

---

- Environment (lighting, noise, activity)
- Sit at their level and face them
- Maintain eye contact and smile
- Use their name when talking to them
- Give full attention and ensure you have their full attention
- Speak slowly and calmly
- Use simple sentences, present one idea at a time, be patient
- Try not to contradict if answer doesn't make sense as this will raise anxiety and confusion

- Don't make it a test: cannot assess dementia in a casual conversation and may cause frustration/anxiety
- Teams, time of day, staff assist?



# Mr. A – 70 yo, CRA low risk, elderly parole, moderate Alzheimer's, CTC

- ☐ Unable to be at the hearing for unclear reason (common for CI)
- ☐ Noted “conflicting information” and “indications that Mr. A may be higher functioning than what recent documents show regarding his dementia”
- ☐ “able to work full time until 2022”
- ☐ “inconsistencies in his physical abilities”
- ☐ “115 not violent but unable to follow the rules of the prison”
- ☐ “not programming”
- ☐ “if he’s released, he will need to learn how to live with others”
- ☐ “needs to develop a release plan”

# Mr B – 85 yo EMP; moderate Alzheimer's; requires CTC bed for ADL support

## Information provided to BPH 7478:

- ☐ Mental status: A&O X 3
- ☐ Physical condition: RUG 0 independent, WC for ambulation; arm use (strong)
- ☐ LOC: requires frequent redirection, bathing grooming requires cueing
- ☐ Prognosis: “fair, dementia likely to worsen over time”
- ☐ MiniCog < 3

## Reality:

- ☐ Mental Status: no idea of day, month, year; psychiatric hospital; pleasant
- ☐ Physical condition: RUG = 0 (requires supervision, cueing for ADLs); very frail
- ☐ Prognosis: “incurable, progressive and terminal”
- ☐ MiniCog < 3 but no MoCa provided (2 yrs prior on admit 13/30)



# Areas for Collaboration

---

- ❖ Ensure Accurate Medial Information
- ❖ Process for clarification when contradictions
- ❖ Provide long term 24/7 perspective
- ❖ Housing and reentry supports
- ❖ Future Q & A Two Way Learning Forums
- ❖ Simulation experience of dementia /aging
- ❖ Tour of Elder Care Units or MCU
- ❖ Dementia training for staff supports
- ❖ Engaging lawyers earlier (time to get records, meet in person)
- ❖ Training board lawyers on dementia
- ❖ Include an ROI with the packet (at least for medical/elderly paroles)
- ❖ Others.....









# Questions/Comments?

---

[michele.ditomas@cdcr.ca.gov](mailto:michele.ditomas@cdcr.ca.gov)

707-761-7866

**Hospice/Palliative Care and Compassionate  
Release Warmline**

[CDCRCCHCSPalliativeCare@cdcr.ca.gov](mailto:CDCRCCHCSPalliativeCare@cdcr.ca.gov)

Photo: Ron Levine/Prisoners of Age